

## **MISSILE**

### *Trajectory*

*The trajectory is the essence of the missile. From the earth to the air, and from the air to the earth.*

*The shape and the technology of the missile has been designed to control this trajectory.*

### *Territory*

*The trajectory of the missile belongs to the air. Its efficiency ignores the complexity of the territory. It is an abstract link between two distinct geographical points.*

*Can the trajectory be the program of this project?*

## **STRATEGY**

*The strategy is not to find a program for these empty spaces. It is to consider the emptiness as a program.*

*The strategy is not to transform the space but to reveal what is potentially in it.*

*The strategy is to reintroduce the presence of the missile by strengthening its absence.*

*The strategy is to use the ephemeral to reveal the permanent. The immateriality of the missile's image will make visible the materiality of the silo.*

## **PROJECT**

*A line on the ground.*

*The trajectory of the missile is materialized on the surface of the territory.*

*A cut into the ground.*

*The line will be used as a ramp of access to the bottom of the silo. The cut will intersect the silo and reveal the presence of the deep concrete cylinder in the ground.*

*The floor of the ramp is a sensitive strip made of T.V. monitors. It reflect the images that the missile has left in our minds.*

*The texture of the image becomes the texture of the ground. The missile's trajectory is the new vector of the visitor's body.*

*By night, from above, coming from the East, the luminescent lines will appear in the darkness as a trace of our memory.*

The structure of the missile silo itself reveals that it is a product of a curious, inverted reasoning: the silo is thickest at its top, becoming thinner as it goes deeper into the earth. Yet we know that all structures built in the earth's gravity, even those underground, endure the greatest stresses at their bottoms. It is only the fear of attack from above that justifies this unusual manner of building. And so the peculiar inversion again becomes evident--the sky, the source of life-giving light and rain--now becomes an agent of death.

Mankind's greatest minds have now been dedicated to the creation of self-destructive weapons, and the fate of the earth has become the heaviest of burdens, looming above, ready to crush us in an instant. The resulting construction is top-heavy, monstrous, an affront to structural logic, yet at the same time offering the sublime fascination inherent in all suicidal thoughts. Still, it is our hope that reason will prevail, allowing us to correct our grave error. It is only upon reflection that the world is once again made right, for surely we were meant to stand upon the earth, not carry its weight above us like the Atlas of myth.

This "reflection" of our folly and our hopes also takes place within the silo in another manner: through the reading and discussion of poetry. The deepest level of the silo houses a collection of poetic writing of all languages, a reading room has been created at the level of the reflecting pool, and the entire silo provides ample opportunities for private discussion or secluded reverie. Poetic writings were deemed the most appropriate, because, as Hans-Georg Gadamer observed, "history only relates how things happened, whereas poetry tells us how things may happen and teaches us to recognize the universal in all human action and suffering."

Dan Willis with Merilee Meacock

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# PROJECT ATLAS

